

The Tennessee Department of Children's Services (DCS) has embraced the principles associated with the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA). Well before the final standards were published, DCS had taken steps to actively train its staff and youth on how to keep youth safe, as well as how to report incidents involving sexual misconduct. DCS has continued to work toward the prevention of sexual abuse, misconduct, and harassment in all state Youth Development Centers (YDCs) and contract provider facilities.

After the Federal PREA Standards became effective, DCS was quick to appoint a department level PREA Program Manager to develop, implement, and oversee agency efforts to comply with the PREA Standards. In addition, each YDC and contract facility has a designated PREA Compliance Manager who coordinates that facility's efforts to comply with the PREA Standards.

In July 2013, DCS applied for and was awarded a Federal PREA grant. This grant allowed for the creation of a PREA Coordinator position exclusively for the YDCs. In addition, a partnership was developed with Sexual Assault Center to provide sexual abuse prevention education to youth, as well as therapeutic services for youth who have alleged sexual abuse at the facility.

While DCS was already practicing many of the required PREA Standards, the agency has made several changes to policy and practice in order to ensure compliance. This includes the development of a risk assessment screening tool to identify youth who might be vulnerable to victimization, as

well as the creation of a Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) at each YDC. DCS created PREA brochures for distribution to youth at intake, which explains how to report sexual abuse and misconduct. In addition, a more comprehensive PREA education is provided to all youth within 10 days of intake.

DCS recognizes the importance of training for staff at all levels in order to successfully implement PREA. A comprehensive PREA training program has been developed and provided to general staff, and a specialized training was developed for Child Protective Services Special Investigators in order to meet PREA Standards. Medical and mental health care staff members are also required to complete specialized training in the following areas:

- How to detect and assess signs of sexual abuse and sexual harassment
- How to preserve physical evidence of sexual abuse
- How to respond effectively and professionally to juvenile victims of sexual abuse and sexual harassment
- How and to whom to report allegations of sexual abuse and sexual harassment

In addition, all volunteers and contractors are required to complete PREA training. The level and type of PREA training they receive is based on the services provided and their level of contact with the youth.

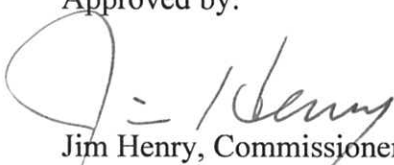
The changes made by DCS to its policies and practices have created a more conducive reporting environment within its facilities. DCS has three (3) state operated Youth Development Centers, and contracts with eight (8) detention centers throughout the state of TN. In addition, DCS contracts with multiple private providers for the placement

and treatment of delinquent offenders who do not meet criteria for placement in a YDC.

DCS has reported PREA investigation data to Department of Justice (DOJ) and Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) for its YDCs as far back as 2009. The PREA Standards for Juveniles, which became effective August 20, 2012, also requires the publishing of data for private providers with whom the agency contracts for placement of youth. DCS will publish data for the year 2013 for all private provider facilities whose primary purpose is serving youth involved in the juvenile justice system. To view the aggregated data for Tennessee's YDCs and contract provider facilities, [click here](#).

To ensure that DCS is continuing to improve the effectiveness of its sexual abuse prevention, detection, and response policies and practices, a review of data collected and aggregated is completed by the agency at least quarterly. In addition, an annual report will be published each year comparing the current year's data and corrective action plans with those from previous years.

Approved by:



Jim Henry, Commissioner
Department of Children's Services